



# YELLOWKNIFE EDUCATION DISTRICT NO. 1

## BOARD of TRUSTEES Regular Board Meeting MINUTES

September 26, 2023 – 7:00 PM

District Office Boardroom & Video Conference

- Trustees present: Allan Shortt (videoconference), Barb Bell, David Wasylciw (videoconference), Jason Snaggs (videoconference), Michelle Peters, Terry Brookes (videoconference), Tina Drew
- Absent/Regrets: none
- Administration Present: Jameel Aziz (videoconference), Tram Do, Shirley Zouboules, Landon Kowalzik, Martin Male, Pat Thagard
- Others present: Two members of the public – Violet and Chris Mackenzie

1.0 Meeting called to Order at 7:02 PM. Seven (7) Trustees were present, quorum met.

2.0 Land Acknowledgement

Chairperson Wasylciw respectfully acknowledged that we live, work, and learn on Chief Drygeese Territory in the Akaitcho region, the traditional territory of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation.

3.0 Chairperson's Opening Remarks

Chairperson Wasylciw thanked and welcomed everyone for joining the meeting.

4.0 Declaration of Conflict of Interest - none

5.0 Adoption of Agenda

### **Motion #: 01/09-26/2023**

*I move that the Board of Trustees of Yellowknife Education District No. 1 adopt the agenda as presented for the September 26, 2023, Regular Board Meeting.*

Moved by: Trustee Brookes; Seconded by: Trustee Drew

Questions: none

**Motion #: 01/09-26/2023**

**Carried**

6.0 Delegations & Presentations – none

7.0 Review and Approval of Minutes

7.1 June 13, 2023

7.2 June 28, 2023

7.3 August 16, 2023

7.4 August 22, 2023

7.5 August 29, 2023

7.6 September 5, 2023

**Motion #: 02/09-26/2023**

*I move that the Board of Trustees of Yellowknife Education District No. 1 defer the approval of minutes as listed, 7.1 to 7.6 on the agenda, to allow time for review.*

Moved by: Trustee Drew; Seconded by: Trustee Bell

Questions: none

**Motion #: 02/09-26/2023**

**Carried**

8.0 Business Arising from the Minutes

8.1 Action Items

Deferred to the October Board meeting.

Trustees suggested keeping completed items on the list for reference to what has been completed.

It was noted that the list of completed items is kept in a separate tab in the workbook.

It was suggested that items completed from one board meeting to the next be kept on the action item list until after the following meeting for which the action item list was created. Administration to act on this suggestion.

9.0 Trustee Statements - none

*Per Bylaws: Trustee Statements are individual opinions and are not intended to represent the views of the Board.*

*Trustee statements are not debatable and there will be no opportunity for rebuttal or questions*

10.0 Unfinished Business

10.1 Bussing Update

Administration indicated Transdev has completed some training of bus drivers during the summer. There are now 12 buses up and running however, capacity is not unlimited. Appeals from people who have been denied a bus pass will be considered once the issuance of passes is completed by the bus company. A number of appeals have been received. YK1 is in a good bussing position right now.

Trustee question: It was noted that some people may use buses as a form of childcare which raises the question about some people moving their children to another school in order to be eligible for a bus pass. Is there a way to know how many?

Administration: That may happen. We will go through a fair and equal process in considering the appeals we receive when it is appropriate to do so.

Trustee question: Are other districts using the same distances?

Administration: Yellowknife Catholic Schools (YCS) has 3 schools and Commission scolaire francophone TNO (CSFTNO) has 1 school in Yellowknife. The same rules apply to all three districts.

Trustee question: Have there always only been 12 buses or were there 13 at one point and then 2 were consolidated?

Administration: Previously there were 13 routes therefore we are still one route short but the current situation is much better than where we were in the spring.

Trustee question: Will that 13<sup>th</sup> route be re-added at some time?

Administration: If enough drivers can be hired it may be added in the future.

Trustee question: Where do distances in the bus pass policy come from?

Administration: It was likely approved by a past board. Our distances are shorter than other jurisdictions due to weather considerations. With regard to the appeal process,

younger children will be given first consideration before older students.

## 10.2 Wildfire and Evacuation Update

Administration indicated this is a good news story. YK1 leadership worked with YCS, CFSTNO, and ECE throughout the evacuation. 98% of YK1 staff were back in on Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup> and the remaining 2% were on pre-approved leave. Overall the first 2 days of school were positive. Feedback from staff was positive. Regular communication was shared which parents appreciated. NWTTA President expressed gratitude for the work of the Board and organization. All things considered we had a great start to the school year.

Trustee question: Did we incur any extraordinary costs to start the school year?

Administration: There were no additional costs directly related to the evacuation. However, filtration systems that were put in place due to COVID and still used due to smoke incur a \$30K filter replacement cost every 6 months which may be added to future budgets.

Trustee question: How much fire-smarting has been done around our schools?

Administration: Maintenance has removed dead materials (grass, trees, etc) and will have to look at fire-smart landscaping at the schools in the future.

Trustees commended the Superintendent, district office, and teaching staff for their successful efforts to bring things back to normal. Parents they have heard from indicated they are very happy with the success of the school year start.

Trustee question: It was noted by Trustees that an arrangement with schools in Alberta allowed students to temporarily attend Alberta schools. It was also noted that the arrangement could have been better communicated. Does administration know if the uptake of that was known?

Administration: Saskatchewan and Manitoba also opened their doors to our students. There was no formal registration therefore getting information on uptake is not possible. YK1 had offered the same to any NWT community evacuees. This gave students a safe place to go while they were displaced. We have a very dedicated and excellent staff at YK1.

Trustees expressed gratitude to whoever put out the resources parents could use with their children. Not all people have internet, therefore, it was suggested that in the future the resources include some activities that do not require internet.

Administration gave kudos to Assistant Superintendent Zouboules, Ed. Services and IT staff for their work on the resource initiative.

## 10.3 Revised School Year Start

Administration met school leaders during the first week back. There are no concerns about students missing any curriculum. We trust the professionalism of our teachers. They are able to adjust to ensure students meet the curriculum outcomes. We are not concerned about the time missed at the beginning of the year. We are waiting to hear what the decision will be in the NWT with regards to Alberta's declaration regarding student requirements to write exams if they missed 3 weeks of school. A number of SJF students have indicated they want to write the exams. Administration recommends YK1 not make any adjustments to the calendar or schedules. It was noted that union negotiations would also have to be entered into if any changes to calendars were contemplated.

There was some discussion about whether Alberta (AB) is going with 10 days or 15 days of school missed due to evacuations. Administration indicated that the most recent information available is 15 days.

Trustee question: As a point of clarification - who decides if the Alberta decision will also happen in the NWT?

Administration indicated that AB has made this decision for their own province. Alberta

would not be the one making the decision for the NWT. Administration is waiting for a decision from ECE.

Trustees hope all is being done to prepare and support students so they have the ability to make choices for their future.

Administration will be meeting with ECE the first week of October and would be happy to provide that perspective if that is the consensus of the Board. It will be up to ECE and YK1 to determine what works best keeping in mind possible pressure or anxiety for students as a result of the decision.

Trustee question: Will we still meet the minimum number of hours required for the school year?

Administration indicated yes, the minimum will be met.

#### 10.4 USW & Board Advisory Committee (BAC) - Policy & TOR

Item deferred to next meeting. The Policy Committee indicated the draft policy/TOR was tabled in order to show it the USW for feedback. The wildfire evacuation delayed this process. The Policy Committee will work to expedite the creation of a final draft.

Administration noted that the USW contract wage increase is tied to the UNW contract with the GNWT. The UNW is currently in contract negotiations with the GNWT.

Trustees hope this can move forward quickly. The intention of the BAC is more of a meet and greet opportunity to facilitate more of an open-door policy for members. It was suggested USW members be advised they can talk to the BAC.

The Policy Committee will work to have the first draft for the next Board meeting.

Administration indicated the UNW has reached out to indicate they would like to wait to hold the first BAC meeting once negotiations are completed.

### 11.0 New Business

#### 11.1 Information Technology Report – Martin Male (report in agenda package)

Martin gave an overview of the contents of the report. Of note:

- BC departmentals are all done electronically.
- On average 1,400 Chromebooks are in use every week.
- Many Chromebook replacements will be coming in the next few years.
- many challenges coming from AI and coding – teachers need more AI and coding PD
- number of pieces of equipment held by YK1 has increased significantly however we still only have 3 staff to service YK1.

Questions:

Trustees would like to suggest a meeting with NWTTA to ask if they have any concerns about AI. There was some discussion about whether or not AI is a governance item. Trustees wonder what stakeholders (i.e. parents) think about AI training.

Administration suggested a future information evening at all school levels to engage with the public on how we are managing AI, technology which is already out there.

Trustees feel there are many gaps that need to be addressed. They see three buckets that need to be considered. They are: the teaching and learning bucket, the safety and security bucket and the information management ecosystem bucket. They would like to see more information on benchmarks, standards and objectives as part of the framework for Board to better understand and support IT. YK1 needs to keep pace with technology to ensure our students have an advantage going forward. AI will play a greater role in our future which brings in trepidation but also many opportunities. The work being done is excellent. They would like Administration to boil down what is needed into a framework so that the Board can support the framework.

Some Trustee question for future meetings:

Can we show that tech improves student outcomes?

Can we ensure our resources are not being used for cyberbullying?

How can we be more eco-conscious?

Should schools be budgeting to replace technology when needed?

What are affects of use of tech on growing minds?

There is a general lack of support for the installation of security cameras in schools because it has not been shown to reduce vandalism.

Administration spoke about software being used at YK1 that looks for inappropriate language and cyberbullying language. IT is notified of any use of that language and sends info to schools when warranted. Other software used monitors for the use of adult chat use.

Trustee question: From a risk perspective do we do ransomware training with staff?

YK1 has equipment in place that protects us from ransomware. Staff cannot download anything (intentionally or not) without support from YK1 IT staff.

Trainee question: Could YK1 offer online cybersecurity training to staff?

IT staff have completed online training but it hasn't been looked into for staff due to time restraints.

Trustees think that, from a governance standpoint the training needs to be in place to protect, staff, students and equipment.

Trustee question: Who owns the info on Google?

Administration indicated that everything on the YK1 network belongs to YK1.

Discussions on IT will be added to a future COW agenda.

**Motion #: 03/09-26/2023**

*I move that the Board of Trustees of Yellowknife Education District No 1 take a 5 minute break.*

Moved by: Trustee Drew; Seconded by: Trustee Peters

Questions: none

**Motion #: 03/09-26/2023**

**Carried**

Chairperson Wasyłciw welcomed members of the public in attendance.

Violet Mackenzie introduced herself and went through recent challenges she faced trying to get her 35-year-old son access to a program to complete his grade 12. She thanked Shirley and Dean McInnis for their assistance. After much back and forth, they were able to sign her son up for online learning. Violet is aware of several other students who are in a similar situation. There is a need for older students to be able to access high school classes. She wondered why it took them so long to find a solution. She feels the age difference is almost a kind of discrimination that older students face. Maybe online learning will be used more in the future. It would be great if there is a room that could be set up for older students use. She said 70% of online learning is accessed by adults. She noted that creative solutions were found during COVID-19 and suggested there is a need to find creative solutions for adult students who want to complete their high school learning.

Chairperson Wasyłciw thanked her for sharing her experience with the Board and suggested she also bring her comments to candidate forums for the upcoming Territorial election.

## 11.2 Territorial Election Advocacy

Chairperson Wasylciw spoke about election forum that is usually run by YK1 and YCS and asked if someone would be willing to work with YCS to plan the forum if Board wants to take part in a forum.

Trustees feel YK1 should be part of planning a forum in order to keep education in the forefront. It was suggested the PR Committee take this on and have a representative to work with YCS on planning the event.

It was also suggested a one-page document be created to inform candidates about YK1. The PR Committee and Administration are tasked with the creation of this document.

The Board supports this approach.

## 12.0 Reports

### 12.1 Chairperson's Report – in agenda package

A couple of things to note:

During the evacuation ongoing conversations were held with YCS, and the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment primarily around whether or not online learning would be instituted.

Continued working relationship with ASBA regarding associate membership.

He attended the CBSA Congress during which there were some very good sessions and good conversations. He will bring further information and questions that arose to a COW.

Spoke to the Public School Board Association of Alberta about PD for the Board and will discuss this topic further at the ASBA Fall Conference.

Correspondence attached for the record

Trustee question: Has it been decided if all Trustees will attend the ASBA Fall Conference? (In consideration of the need to take time off work.)

Chairperson Wasylciw will follow up and advise trustees ASAP.

Trustee question: Has an agenda been received yet?

Chairperson Wasylciw has requested a copy of the draft agenda to best use the time available during that time.

### 12.2 Trustee Reports

Trustee Drew highlighted that this is Truth and Reconciliation (T & R) week and suggested people sign up for online Indigenous events and/or attend events happening in the community. She indicated the T & R website indicates anyone can take part for free.

### 12.3 Standing Committee Reports

#### 12.3.1 Finance (Chairperson - Trustee Snaggs)

Administration is working with the Department of Finance, GNWT to finalize the audit. A Finance Committee meeting will be held in due course to update the Board.

#### 12.3.2 Public Relations (Chairperson - Trustee Bell) – nothing to report

#### 12.3.3 Policy (Chairperson – Trustee Brookes)

A meeting was held on July 6<sup>th</sup>. Minutes are in the agenda package. The Committee is working to get back on track with their workplan.

#### 12.3.4 Audit Committee (Chairperson – Trustee Bell) –nothing to report

#### 12.3.5 Committee of the Whole (Chairperson - Trustee Brookes)

The last COW was in June; reports are included in the agenda package

#### 12.3.6 Facilities Committee (Chairperson – Trustee Drew) – nothing to report

#### 12.3.7 NWTTA Teacher-Board Committee (Reps: Trustees Bell & Brookes) Nothing to report

## 12.4 Ad Hoc Committee Reports

12.4.1 Strategic Plan Committee – nothing to report

12.4.2 Negotiations Committee – no current negotiations

## 12.5 Superintendent's Report

Items in the Superintendent's report were highlighted earlier in the meeting; Attention was drawn to Assistant Superintendent Zouboules' report. There will be some information coming soon about enrolment but it is not yet public.

Trustee question: this was the first time the district office was closed during the summer. Did this cause any delays?

Administration indicated the break was to allow district office staff to rest and relax after wrapping up the 2022-2023 school year and before the start of the new school year. All reporting required to that time was complete.

Trustee question: was the closure an issue for parents?

Administration indicated parents were given a lot of advanced notice of the closure and when the office would re-open. Numerous staff kept an eye on emails while we were closed. We do not have any reports of issues for parents.

### 12.5.1 Assistant Superintendents Reports

Trustee question: in terms of the strategic plan, what implementation steps are occurring this year?

Administration indicated that all reports submitted reflect work through the strategic priorities.

Trustee question: Now that the new curriculum has begun how is it going?

Administration met with school leadership to determine what they need knowing the curriculum content is not significantly different. Assessment and reporting will be different. Administration is working with staff to ensure clarity of requirements. Education Services staff are going to schools to support them.

Trustee question: How are we doing with staffing levels?

Administration is working with school staff to ensure students' needs are met. Thanks to the Board's support for starting recruitment earlier last year YK1 did not have hiring issues like other jurisdictions are having.

Trustee question: Will there be any future needs?

Administration is working to address all needs.

Trustee question: Are we short staff?

Administration: We are not short however, we are still doing some hiring. Currently, we have a position posted for MHS and many applications. We have received funding for social-emotional support. We are still in need of more substitute teachers but we are currently fine with our day-to-day staff.

Trustee question: Have the changes to the CYC program happened?

Administration: ECE is currently in a state of flux. YK1 expects to get some funding from ECE. Some CYCs are still providing support to some schools. The transition may not happen this year. Currently, there are many rumors mixed in with facts about the CYC Program. This topic will be brought up at the next meeting of Superintendents and ECE.

Trustee question: How many CYCs do we currently have?

Administration: There are currently 8-10 in Yellowknife.

Trustee question: Will there be a change from NTHSSA and ECE? How will funding work?

Chairperson Wasylciw: At the last board chairs meeting they were told it will not go

back to what it was and won't be the same as the current program but it may be somewhere in the middle. Waiting to hear more.

#### 12.5.2 Secretary-Treasurer Report

Report attached

Trustee question: Will the cost of phones for SJF go into last year's budget or this year's budget?

Administration: The invoice was received just prior to the audit, at year end. A report will be provided next month

Trustee question: Request to explain per diem changes for bus drivers.

Administration: went over changes to rates. Invoices will be charged according to 2023-2024 ridership.

Trustee question: Will this increase affect our budget?

Administration: Funds will come from this year's budget and some surplus from last year.

#### 12.5.3.i Director of Operations Report

Trustee question: Should we think about fireproofing our schools every year?

Board agreed that this would be a good practice.

Trustee question: Can you please provide an update on vandalism?

Administration: Playground equipment at NJM was vandalized, bicycles were stolen from MHS and there was damage to security cameras for a total cost of \$40-50K.

Trustee question: Is there any impact on the budget and have repairs and/or replacements been completed?

Administration: we are helping MHS to source replacement bikes at a reasonable rate. Concern about security measures going forward to be discussed.

Trustee direction: Provide recommendations at future meetings for the Board to review.

#### 12.6 Trustee PAC Meeting Reports - none

12.6.1 École It'ò

12.6.2 Mildred Hall School

12.6.3 N.J. Macpherson School

12.6.4 Range Lake North School

12.6.5 École Sir John Franklin High School

12.6.6 École William McDonald School

#### 13.0 Announcements – events calendar attached

Trustee: October is Fire Safety Month. Can we advise people that they need to drink extra water when smoke is in the air? Information about how to protect people from smoke is to be shared. It is important to share fire safety information with students.

#### 14.0 Date and Time of Next Meetings:

Oct. 10, 2023, 12:00 PM

CoTW Meeting

Oct. 10, 2023, 6:30 PM

Executive Session – in camera

Oct. 10, 2023, 7:00 PM

Regular Board Meeting

#### 15.0 Chairperson's Closing Remarks



This Saturday is National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Events are taking place everywhere. Everyone is encouraged to attend events if they are able to.

During upcoming meetings will be approving the annual report and will continue discussing IT as it relates to governance.

Everyone was thanked for attending the meeting.

16.0 Adjournment

**Motion #: 03/08-29/2023**

*I move that this board meeting of the Yellowknife Education District No.1 Board of Trustees be adjourned*

Moved by: Trustee Snaggs; Seconded by: Trustee Brookes

The meeting adjourned at 9:37PM

Patrizia Thagard, Secretary

**Signed after update, as required and approval:**

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**Chairperson Wasylciw**

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**Secretary-Treasurer Do**